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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/766,816	01/30/2004	Nobumasa Suzuki	03599.000093	3133
5514	7590	12/14/2007	EXAMINER	
FITZPATRICK CELLA HARPER & SCINTO 30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA NEW YORK, NY 10112				LUND, JEFFRIE ROBERT
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1792				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
12/14/2007		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/766,816	SUZUKI, NOBUMASA
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Jeffrie R. Lund	1792

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 February 2007.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-3 and 6 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3 and 6 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 30 January 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ . |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

2. Claims 1-4 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The new limitation "wherein the plasma is a microwave excitation surface wave plasma or a microwave excitation surface wave interference plasma" is not supported in the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-3 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Karner et al, US Patent 5,616,373.

Karner et al teaches a plasma processing chamber that includes: a process chamber 1 that accommodates an object 4 to be processed and generates plasma; a

gas introducing part 7 for introducing gas into the process chamber; a mechanism 3a that arranges the object in the flow of the gas such that the object is between the gas introducing part 7 and the plasma generating region 23c in the flow of the gas; and an exhaust mechanism 72 for exhausting the gas; and a conductance adjuster 24 having a plurality of holes 21c. (Figure 6) The specific plasma treatment is an intended use of the apparatus. Karner et al is capable of performing a plasma oxidation or nitridation.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-3 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Karner et al, US Patent 5,616,373, in view of Ogawa et al, US Patent 4,051,382.

Karner et al teaches a plasma processing chamber that includes: a process chamber 1 that accommodates an object 4 to be processed and generates plasma; a gas introducing part 7 for introducing gas into the process chamber; a mechanism 3a that arranges the object in the flow of the gas such that the object is between the gas introducing part 7 and the plasma generating region 23c in the flow of the gas; and an exhaust mechanism 72 for exhausting the gas; and a conductance adjuster 24 having a plurality of holes 21c. (Figure 6) The specific plasma treatment is an intended use of the apparatus. Karner et al is capable of performing a plasma oxidation or nitridation.

Karner et al differs from the present invention in that Karner et al does not teach

that the plasma source is a microwave plasma source.

Ogawa et al teaches microwave plasma source 4, 5 for generating a plasma. (Figure 1)

The motivation for replacing the plasma generating means of Karner et al with the plasma generating means of Ogawa et al is to provide an alternate plasma generating means. Furthermore, it has been held that the simple substitution of one known element for another to obtain predictable results is obvious (see *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*). In this case, it would have been obvious to replace arc discharge plasma generating means of Karner that forms a plasma with microwave plasma generating means of Ogawa et al that is also well known to form a plasma.

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to replace the plasma generating means of Karner with the plasma generating means of Ogawa et al.

Double Patenting

7. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to

be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

8. Claims 1-6 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-6 of copending Application No. 11/295,667 ('667) in view of Karner et al, US Patent 5,616,373, and Ogawa et al, US Patent 4,051,382.

'667 teaches: a process chamber; a gas introduction part arranged closer to the object than a plasma generating region; an exhaust mechanism arranged closer to the plasma region (claim 1); a conductance adjuster with holes (claims 2 and 3); the exhaust mechanism located on the side of the plasma region partitioned by the conductance adjuster (claim 4); and a first and second gas inlet (claim 5).

'667 differs from the present invention in that it does not teach that the object is between the gas introducing part and the plasma generating region in the flow of the gas, or that the plasma is formed by microwaves.

Karner et al was discussed above and includes an object 4 located between the gas introducing part 15 and a plasma generating region 23c in the flow of the gas.

Ogawa et al was discussed above and includes a plasma formed by microwaves.

The motivation for placing the object in the flow of the processing gas is to expose the surface of the object to the process gases to process the object.

The motivation for forming the plasma with a microwave is to provide an alternate plasma source as taught by Ogawa et al.

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to place the object of '667 in the flow of the gas as taught by Karner et al, and generate the plasma using microwaves as discussed above.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-3 and 6 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

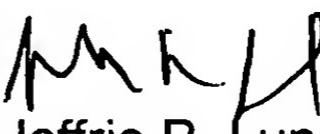
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrie R. Lund whose telephone number is (571) 272-

1437. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday (10:00 am - 9:00 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Parviz Hassanzadeh can be reached on (571) 272-1435. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Jeffrie R. Lund
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1792

JRL
12/10/07